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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer program product, tangibly stored on a machine-readable medium, comprising a first application's instructions to perform operations comprising: operable in a computer program application to cause a first instance of the application when executing on a computer to:  
generating generate a first container object, wherein the first container object has having a recognizable container type and the container type that is associated with the first application, the first container object [[:]]  
~~include in the first container object:~~including a sender's certificate or a request for a recipient's certificate;  
using a second application distinct from the first application to transmit the first container object to a recipient's address;  
obtaining receive a second container object from the second application, the second container object having been received by the second application and wherein the second container object having has the same recognizable container type as the first container object;  
and  
automatically identify and extracting one or more certificates from within the second container object.
2. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 1, further comprising the first application's instructions to perform operations comprising: operable to:  
prior to generating a first container object, receiving receive input from a sender specifying the recipient's address and specifying one or more of a certificate of the sender and a request for the recipient's certificate to include in the first container object.

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3. (Original) The computer program product of claim 1, wherein transmitting the first container object includes transmitting the first container object by one of electronic mail and Hypertext Transfer Protocol.
4. (Original) The computer program product of claim 1, wherein the first container object is generated by a server.
5. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 1, further comprising the first application's instructions to perform operations comprising the instructions further operable to:  
determining whether the sender has multiple certificates;  
if the sender has multiple certificates, receiving receive input from the sender selecting one or more of the sender's multiple certificates;  
retrieving retrieve the sender's selected certificates from a certificate database; and  
including include the sender's selected certificates in the first container object.
6. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 1, wherein the first container object includes a request for a recipient's certificate, further comprising the first application's instructions to perform operations comprising the instructions further operable to:  
receiving receive input from a sender specifying a return address for receiving the recipient's certificate and instructions for returning the recipient's certificate; and  
including include in the first container object the return address and instructions for returning the recipient's certificate.
7. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 1, wherein the first container object includes a sender's certificate, and further comprising the first application's instructions to perform operations comprising the instructions are further operable to:  
including include in the first container object validation information to be used to validate the sender's certificate.
8. (Original) The computer program product of claim 1, wherein the container type is Forms Data Format.

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9. (Currently Amended) A computer program product, tangibly stored on a machine-readable medium, for a machine which associates a first application with a MIME container type, so that subsequent to a second application distinct from the first application receiving a container object having the MIME container type, it is recognized that the container type is associated with the first application, comprising the first application's instructions to perform operations comprising:

automatically obtaining the container object from the first application;  
recognizing for receiving a certificate, comprising instructions operable in a computer program application to cause a first instance of the application when executing on a computer to:  
receive a container object from a second instance of the application, the container object having a recognizable container type and being associated with the application;  
recognize that the container type is associated with the application and that the container object may include a certificate of a sender of the container object; and  
automatically determining ~~determine~~ if the container object contains a certificate of the sender.

10. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 9, wherein the instructions operable to receive a container object comprise instructions operable to receive a message including the container object by at least one of the following: electronic mail or Hypertext Transfer Protocol.

11. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 9, wherein the MIME container type is Forms Data Format.

12. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 9, wherein the container object includes a certificate and validation information, and further comprising the first application's instructions to perform operations comprising:~~and the instructions are further operable to:~~

[[to]] accepting or rejecting the certificate using the validation information; and  
if the certificate is accepted, [[to]] extracting the certificate and storing ~~store~~ the certificate.

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13. (Currently Amended) A computer program product, tangibly stored on a machine-readable medium, for a machine which associates a first application with a MIME container type, so that subsequent to a second application distinct from the first application receiving a container object having the MIME container type, it is recognized that the MIME container type is associated with the first application, comprising the first application's instructions to perform operations comprising for receiving a request for a certificate, comprising instructions operable in a computer program application to cause a first instance of the application when executing on a computer to:

~~\_\_\_\_\_ receive a first container object from a second instance of the application, the first container object having a recognizable container type and being associated with the application;~~  
~~\_\_\_\_\_ recognize the container type as associated with the application and automatically obtaining the container object from the first application;~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_ recognizing that the first container object may include a request for a certificate of a recipient of the container object;~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_ automatically determining determine if the first container object includes a request for a certificate of the recipient; and~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_ if a request is included in the first container object, then responding to the request.~~

14. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 13, further comprising the first application's instructions to perform operations comprising:

~~wherein the instructions operable to respond to the request further comprise instructions operable to:~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_ generating generate a second container object of the same MIME container type including a certificate of the recipient;~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_ extracting a return address from the first container object; and~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_ using the second application to transmit the second container object to the return address.~~

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15. (Current Amended) The computer program product of claim 14, wherein the instructions ~~to perform operations comprising operable to transmitting~~ the second container object include instructions ~~operable to to perform operations comprising transmitting~~ by at least one of the following: electronic mail or Hypertext Transfer Protocol.

16. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 14, wherein the certificate of the recipient is stored in a certificate database, and further comprising the first application's instructions to perform operations comprising the instructions are further operable to:

determining whether the recipient has multiple certificates;

if the recipient has multiple certificates, receiving receive input from the recipient selecting one or more of the recipient's multiple certificates;

retrieving retrieve the selected certificates from the certificate database; and

including include the selected certificates in the second container object.

17. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 14, further comprising the first application's instructions to perform operations comprising: the instructions further operable to:

including include in the second container object validation information to be used to validate the certificate of the recipient.

18. (Original) The computer program product of claim 14, wherein the first container object and the second container object are a Forms Data Format container type.

19. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 13, wherein the first container object is received from a networked server and further comprising the first application's instructions to perform operations comprising: wherein the instructions operable to respond to the request further comprise instructions operable to:

transmitting the recipient's certificate back to the networked server by Hypertext Transfer Protocol.

20. (Original) The computer program product of claim 13, wherein the container type is Forms Data Format container type.

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21-22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 1, wherein the first container object contains both a sender's certificate and a request for a recipient's certificate. ~~A computer program product, tangibly stored on a machine-readable medium, comprising instructions operable in a computer program application to cause a first instance of the application when executing on a computer to:~~

- ~~—— generate a first container object including one or more of instructions for retrieving a sender's certificate and instructions requesting a recipient's certificate;~~
- ~~—— include in the first container object one or more of a retrieved sender's certificate and a request for a recipient's certificate;~~
- ~~—— transmit the first container object to a recipient's address;~~
- ~~—— receive a second container object from the recipient; and~~
- ~~—— automatically identify and extract one or more certificates from within the second container object.~~

24. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 23, further comprising the first application's instructions to perform operations comprising: ~~further comprising instructions operable to:~~

prior to generating a first container object, receiving ~~receive~~ input from a sender specifying the recipient's address and specifying one or more of a certificate of the sender and a request for the recipient's certificate to include in the first container object.

25. (Original) The computer program product of claim 23, wherein transmitting the first container object includes transmitting the first container object by one of electronic mail and by Hypertext Transfer Protocol.

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26. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 23, further comprising the first application's instructions to perform operations comprising: the instructions further operable to:

determining whether the sender has multiple certificates;

\_\_\_\_\_ if the sender has multiple certificates, receiving receive input from the sender selecting one or more of the sender's multiple certificates;

including include instructions for retrieving the sender's selected certificates in the first container object.

27. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 23, wherein the first container object includes instructions requesting a recipient's certificate, further comprising the first application's instructions to perform operations comprising: the instructions further operable to:

receiving receive input from a sender specifying a return address for receiving the recipient's certificate and instructions for returning the recipient's certificate; and

including include in the first container object the return address and instructions for returning the recipient's certificate.

28. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 23, wherein the first container object includes a sender's certificate, further comprising the first application's instructions to perform operations comprising: and the instructions are further operable to:

including include in the first container object instructions for validating the sender's certificate.

29. (Original) The computer program product of claim 23, wherein the container type is Forms Data Format.

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30. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method, comprising:  
generating, using a first application, a first container object, wherein the first container object has a recognizable container type ~~and the container type that~~ is associated with the first application, the first container object including[[:] ]  
~~including in the first container object a sender's certificate[[:] ] or a request for a~~  
recipient's certificate;  
transmitting, using a second application which is distinct from the first application, the first container object to a recipient's address  
receiving, using the second application, a second container object, wherein the second container object has the same recognizable container type; and  
automatically identifying and extracting, using the first application, one or more certificates from within the second container object.
31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 30, further comprising:  
prior to generating a first container object, receiving input, using the first application, from a sender specifying the recipient's address and specifying one or more of a certificate of the sender and a request for the recipient's certificate to include in the first container object.
32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 31, wherein transmitting the first container object includes transmitting the first container object by at least one of the following: electronic mail or Hypertext Transfer Protocol.
33. (Original) The method of claim 30, wherein the first container object is generated by a server.



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34. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 30, further comprising,  
determining, using the first application, whether the sender has multiple certificates;  
if the sender has multiple certificates, then receiving input, using the first application,  
from the sender selecting one or more of the sender's multiple certificates;  
retrieving, using the first application, the sender's selected certificates from a certificate  
database; and  
including, using the first application, the sender's selected certificates in the first  
container object.
35. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 30, wherein the first container object includes  
a request for a recipient's certificate, the method further comprising:  
receiving input, at the first application, from a sender specifying a return address for  
receiving the recipient's certificate and instructions for returning the recipient's certificate; and  
including in the first container object the return address and instructions for returning the  
recipient's certificate.
36. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 30, wherein the first container object includes  
a sender's certificate, the method further comprising:  
including, using the first application, in the first container object validation information to  
be used to validate the sender's certificate.
37. (Original) The method of claim 30, wherein the container type is Forms Data Format.

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38. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method for receiving a certificate, the method comprising:

receiving, using a second application, a container object from an instance of an application, the container object having a recognizable container type and being that is associated with the application a first application which is distinct from the second application;

recognizing, using the second application, that the container type is associated with the first application[[:]]

recognizing, using the first application, [[and]] that the container object may include a certificate of a sender of the container object; and

automatically determining, using the first application, if the container object contains a certificate of the sender.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38, wherein receiving a container object comprises receiving a message including the container object by at least one of the following: electronic mail or Hypertext Transfer Protocol.

40. (Original) The method of claim 38, wherein the container type is Forms Data Format.

41. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 38, wherein the container object includes a certificate and validation information, the method further comprising:

accepting or rejecting, using the first application, the certificate using the validation information; and

if accepting the certificate, then extracting, using the first application, the certificate and storing the certificate.

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42. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method for receiving a request for a certificate, the method comprising:

receiving, using a second application, a first container object from an instance of an application, the first container object having a recognizable container type and being that is associated with a first [[the]] application which is distinct from the second application;

recognizing, using the second application, the container type as associated with the first application[;]]

recognizing, using the first application, [[and ]]that the first container object may include a request for a certificate of a recipient of the container object;

automatically determining, using the first application, if the first container object includes a request for a certificate of the recipient; and

if a request is included in the first container object, then responding, using the first application, to the request.

43. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 42, wherein responding to the request further comprises:

generating, using the first application, a second container object including a certificate of the recipient;

extracting, using the first application, a return address from the first container object; and  
transmitting, using the second application, the second container object to the return address.

44. (Original) The method of claim 43, wherein transmitting the second container object includes transmitting by one of electronic mail and Hypertext Transfer Protocol.

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45. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 43, wherein the certificate of the recipient is stored in a certificate database, the method further comprising,

determining, using the first application, whether the recipient has multiple certificates;

if the recipient has multiple certificates, then receiving input, using the first application,  
from the recipient selecting one or more of the recipient's multiple certificates;

retrieving, using the first application, the selected certificates from the certificate  
database; and

including, using the first application, the selected certificates in the second container  
object.

46. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 43, further comprising:

including, using the first application, in the second container object validation  
information to be used to validate the certificate of the recipient.

47. (Original) The method of claim 43, wherein the first container object and the second container object are a Forms Data Format container type.

48. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 42, wherein the first container object is received from a networked server and wherein responding to the request further comprises:

transmitting, using the second application, the recipient's certificate back to the  
networked server by Hypertext Transfer Protocol.

49. (Original) The method of claim 42, wherein the container type is Forms Data Format container type.

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50. (New) A system, comprising:

- a first instance of a first application operable to generate a first container object, the first container object having a recognizable container type that is associated with the first application, the first container object including a sender's certificate or a request for a recipient's certificate;

- a first instance of a second application operable to transmit the first container object to a recipient's address, the second application being distinct from the first application;

- a second instance of the second application operable to receive the first container object and to recognize the container type as associated with the first application; and

- a second instance of the first application operable to:

- recognize that the first container object may include a request for a certificate of a recipient of the container object;

- automatically determine if the first container object includes the certificate of the sender, and if so, then automatically identify and extract one or more certificates from within the first container object; and

- automatically determine if the first container object includes the request for the certificate of the recipient, and if so, then respond to the request, generating a second container object of the same recognizable container type including the certificate of the recipient, and using the second instance of the second application to transmit the second container object to an address of the sender.

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51. (New) The system of claim 50, wherein:
- the container type is Forms Data Format;
  - the first application is operable to generate Forms Data Format containers and the second application is an e-mail client application;
  - the system includes a first computer and a second computer operating in communication with the first computer over the Internet;
  - the first instance of the first application is installed on the first computer;
  - the first instance of the e-mail client application is installed on the first computer;
  - the second instance of the first application is installed on the second computer; and
  - the second instance of the e-mail client application is installed on the second computer.